

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 1, 2009

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2009—10 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 537

Introduced by Assembly Member Arambula

February 25, 2009

An act to add Section ~~412~~ 47020.5 to the Food and Agricultural Code, relating to agriculture.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 537, as amended, Arambula. Agriculture: direct marketing: farmers' ~~markets~~: *markets: electronic benefit transfers*.

Existing law authorizes the Secretary of Food and Agriculture to adopt regulations to encourage the direct sale by farmers to the public of all types of California agricultural products. Existing law authorizes farmers to sell the agricultural products they produce directly to the public at certified farmers' markets, field retail stands, and farm stands, as provided.

~~This bill would require the secretary to increase access to healthy food for all Californians by allowing redemption of all nutrition program forms of payment at farmers' markets, and to invest in sustainable models of distribution for California-grown products to retail markets in low-income neighborhoods.~~

This bill would require every operator of a farmers' market, as a condition of certification, to implement a system to accept electronic benefit transfer payments by January 1, 2012. The bill would require the Secretary, in consultation with the Certified Farmers' Market Advisory Committee, to determine the best way to achieve this goal and identify funding for this purpose.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 47020.5 is added to the Food and
2 Agricultural Code, to read:
3 47020.5. Every operator of a certified farmers' market shall,
4 by January 1, 2012, implement a system to accept electronic benefit
5 transfer (EBT) payments from EBT clients. As of January 1, 2012,
6 no farmers' market shall be eligible for a certificate nor shall any
7 certificate issued before January 1, 2012, be valid if the farmers'
8 market does not have a system in place to accept EBT payments.
9 SEC. 2. The Secretary of Food and Agriculture, in consultation
10 with the Certified Farmers' Market Advisory Committee, shall,
11 after one or more public workshops, with public notice, and an
12 opportunity for all interested parties to comment, determine the
13 best way to achieve universal acceptance of electronic benefit
14 transfers at certified farmers' markets by January 1, 2012, and
15 identify potential funding sources available for this purpose,
16 including, but not limited to, grants and zero or low interest loans.
17 SECTION 1. ~~Section 412 is added to the Food and Agricultural~~
18 ~~Code, to read:~~
19 ~~412. The secretary shall increase access to healthy food for all~~
20 ~~Californians by allowing redemption of all nutrition program forms~~
21 ~~of payment at farmers' markets, and invest in sustainable models~~
22 ~~of distribution for California-grown products to retail markets in~~
23 ~~low-income neighborhoods.~~